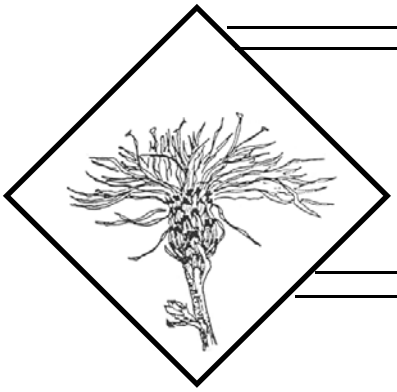


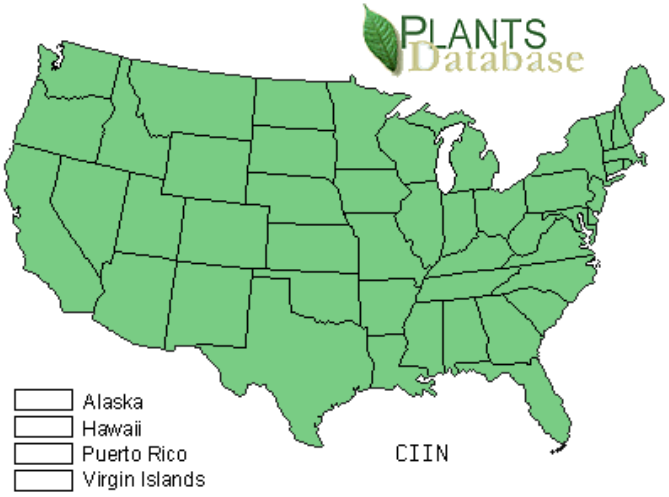
# *Weeds in the Garden*
## Chicory

**Name:** Chicory

**Scientific Name:** *Cichorium intybus*

**Description:** Chicory has also been called "ragged sailor", probably because its flowers are sailor blue and have a ragged outline. Early scientist, Linnaeus, selected chicory as one of the flowers on his floral clock. This unusual clock was based on the opening and closing of flower blooms at each hour of the day. Linnaeus selected chicory to represent 5:00 a.m. when its flowers open at first light. While this clock may not have been entirely reliable, the flowers of chicory do open early on sunny mornings and close around noon.

**Current Range:** It is now found from New Foundland to British Columbia and south throughout the Unites States.




Chicory forms a deep taproot with a milky sap. The plant stems are hollow and when large, become woody and reddish in color. It has multiple branches.

Leaves are alternate, irregularly toothed or deeply lobed and form a rosette near the base of the plant. Flowers are usually blue with occasional white or pink. They are located at the tops of the branches. Flowers bloom from June to October.

**"Look Alikes":** When not in bloom, the rosette of leaves at the base of the chicory plant can resemble the dandelion. The leaves of the dandelion are smooth on the underside, while chicory has a hairy rough under-leaf.

**Habitat:** Chicory grows in many soil types but prefers fertile loamy or sandy soils. It is a cool weather crop and can only withstand moderate summer temperatures. It can not grow in moist or wet soils. It can survive somewhat infertile soils and once established can withstand drought. It is often seen in fields, along roadside ditches, is planted as an agricultural crop.

**Origin:** Chicory is native to Europe, Central Russia and Western Asia. The Egyptians cultivated it as early as 5000 years ago in the Nile River Valley. It continues to be widely cultivated in Europe where its leaves are used for salads, and its root as a vegetable and as a coffee substitute or additive. It was brought to North America as a food crop. It continues to be an agricultural crop in the U.S.

**The Problem:** While chicory might be considered a lesser threat than some extremely invasive plants, its pretty blue flowers and historical uses by humans have made it a popular choice in gardens and thus chicory has become widespread in many regions. It is a tough plant, and can withstand extreme drought and poor soil conditions. Its deep taproot make it difficult to remove. It is highly adaptable to local conditions. For example, in a tall meadow its leaves can grow tall and unlobed allowing it to reach sunlight. In an open waste spaces, the leaves revert to a short, lobed form allowing the plant to reduce moisture loss. Its wide distribution through agriculture has encouraged its invasion into natural ecosystems.

## Solutions:

*Prevention* – Education and citizen awareness can play a huge role in controlling this exotic species. Gardeners and landscapers can slow its spread by eliminating its use in yards and gardens. Plants already in cultivation can be removed and destroyed.

*Mechanical* – Pulling chicory may reduce plant numbers and control spread of the species. It is important to remove the entire plant and conduct the removals before seeds are formed.

*Chemical* - Prior to use of chemical herbicides, it is important to consult with local natural resource staff to determine which herbicides would be the most effective and would have the least impact on native species. It is also essential to follow safety instructions on the selected product.

**For more information please contact the**
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